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News Release

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February 1st Snow Survey Results

FORT JONES, CA – Forest Service personnel have completed the February 1st Snow Surveys on the Salmon Scott Ranger District of the Klamath National Forest. These measurements are a part of the statewide California Cooperative Snow Survey program, which is operated by the California Department of Water Resources. The Snow Survey program enables water managers to better estimate annual runoff available for hydroelectric generation, agriculture and municipal water use, and other water needs.

Five snow courses within the Scott River drainage were measured. The survey shows that snow depth and water content are extremely low, with snow depth at 1.4% of normal and water content at 2.8% of normal compared to historical values for February. These measurements were taken prior to the last week's influx of precipitation, however, warm temperatures have contributed to keeping snow levels high (over 7,000 feet) throughout the course of recent storms. Most locations historically reach their annual snow accumulation maximum by late-March to early-April.

Snow Surveys are conducted monthly during the winter and spring months (February through May). Four of the five Scott River snow courses were established between 1946 and 1955, with one added in 1986. All of them are located in the mountains of the Klamath National Forest, west of Scott Valley. Some courses are located close to roads while others require hours of travel by snow shoes and snowmobile.

When conducting a snow survey, the snow depth and water content are measured by a snow sampling tube with a cutter end that is driven through the snow pack, measuring depth. The snow core is then weighed to determine the water content (water equivalent). In addition to

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snow pack, water content data, precipitation, and similar historic hydrologic data are collected. This year, due to current low snow conditions, a “grab bag” method of collecting snow was used which entails weighing a quantified amount of snow in a bag to obtain a more accurate reading. This method is applied to survey snow pack when there’s little snow (less than 10 inches).

For more information, go to the California Department of Water Resources website: <http://cdec.water.ca.gov/snow>. Monthly snow survey results for the Salmon Scott Ranger District will be posted on the Forest website at: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/news/klamath/news-events>

Snow Course		Snow Depth		Equivalent Water Content		
Name	2/1/2014	February Historic Average	Current vs. Historic Average	2/1/2014	February Historic Average	Current vs. Historic Average
Middle Boulder #1 6600' elevation	0.8"	51.1"	1.6%	0.4"	19.6"	2.0%
	<i>(Established 1946)</i>					
Middle Boulder #3 6200' elevation	1.9"	50.1"	3.8%	1.4"	17.9"	7.8%
	<i>(Established 1948)</i>					
Dynamite Meadow 5700' elevation	0.2"	39.4"	0.51%	0.2"	12.6"	1.6%
	<i>(Established 1955)</i>					
Swampy John 5500' elevation	0.5"	58.9"	0.85%	0.5"	20.0"	2.5%
	<i>(Established 1951)</i>					
Scott Mountain 5900' elevation	0"	42.4"	0%	0"	15.0"	0%
	<i>(Established 1986)</i>					
Total average:	1.4 %			2.8 %		

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